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also, fostered by this flexibility of their language, often leads them to enlarge the nomenclature of a particular science to an unnecessary, and even a ridiculous, extent.

It is difficult to give any account of the contents of this work, which shall obviate the necessity of examining the book itself, before the student can tell whether it will answer his purpose. A brief introduction contains a list of the principal works on the metrical science of the Greeks and Romans, which will be very serviceable to those who wish to study the subject in its widest latitude. The first part relates to the doctrine of rhythm, and gives the necessary definitions, and those general views of the topics to be explained which it is necessary to master before we enter upon the study of the details. The introduction to the second part contains a brief survey of the history of Greek and Roman poetry, with particular reference to the metres employed. This is followed by the body of the work, containing a detailed explanation of the various modes in which the laws of rhythm were applied to poetry by the ancients. The different kinds of verse are taken up in a natural order, and their structure is explained with great clearness and precision, and illustrated by numerous examples. The theory of metre here adopted agrees in every essential respect with that of Böckh, which Dr. Munk prefers to the system of Hermann, because the latter is made unnecessarily obscure, through the writer's attachment to the philosophical views and language of Kant. Certainly, the subject is abstruse enough in itself, without being darkened by the Egyptian gloom which fills every recess of the "Critical Philosophy."

The typographical execution of the book is very neat, and as great pains have been taken with the correction of the proofs, we may presume that it is quite free from errors. A copy of it ought to be in the hands of every classical teacher and pupil, as an indispensable auxiliary to his grammar and dictionary, in enabling him to acquire clear views of the form and internal arrangement of ancient poetry.

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2. — *Observations in Europe, principally in France and Great Britain*. By JOHN P. DURBIN, D. D., President of Dickinson College. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1844. 2 vols. 12mo.

It is no easy thing, in this age, to write a book of travels in Europe, that shall have any thing of originality or interest. All the prominent objects, whether of nature or of art, have been

described so many times, that to go over the description again is like repeating an old joke, or parading a venerable Joe Miller for the entertainment of a dinner party. The case is somewhat changed, when the peculiarities of society, or the manners of the times, are the writer's subject; for these are ever shifting, or the writer's point of view differs from any taken by his predecessors; and whatever concerns the men and women of a country creates an interest ever fresh. A large part of Dr. Durbin's book consists of descriptions that fall under the former remarks. They are well written, with no flourish or pretension; but they are mere repetitions of what a thousand tourists have told us before. If the book is designed for the well read classes of the buying public, much of it is undoubtedly superfluous. The author's relations, however, with a numerous and powerful sect, and the information on the religious state of the countries he visited, which he interweaves with the more ordinary texture of the work, will undoubtedly secure him a large and respectful audience. The tone of the book is in the highest degree praiseworthy. Dr. Durbin does not disguise his own religious opinions, while he treats others with candor and Christian decorum. On some topics, — for example, the position of Napoleon with respect to the other powers of Europe previously to the battle of Waterloo, and the effect upon the cause of liberty of English interference in the affairs of the continent at that time, — Dr. Durbin advances opinions at variance with those usually entertained by English and American writers, and more in accordance with the opinions of the French Liberals.

Dr. Durbin had frequent occasion, especially during his visit to England, to feel — as every American traveller must — the deep disgrace which has sullied the American name, since the execrable dishonesty of the repudiating and defaulting States has so disastrously blighted the hopes of freedom throughout the world. Most of the attacks upon Americans he was able to encounter by a plain statement of facts; but for repudiation, and the failure to pay the interest on the Pennsylvania bonds, he was able to find no excuse. Late events have unhappily overthrown some of the arguments which were effective a year or two ago. He says, for example, "Our British friends, innocent of all knowledge of American geography, make no difference between Arkansas and Massachusetts, Iowa and Pennsylvania. A murder is committed at the distance of fifteen hundred or two thousand miles from Philadelphia, *and they imagine at once, that the streets of the Quaker city are thronged with savages, and that bowie-knives are as common there as walking-sticks in Regent Street.*" What will the Doctor's friends say to him,

when they read the bloody history of the recent riots, perpetrated by throngs of savages in the streets of the Quaker city, infinitely more inexcusable, ferocious, and murderous, than the Lynchers of the South and West? We remember hearing a gentleman from the Southwest say, with as much wit as sarcasm, that, coming from a law-and-order loving country like Mississippi, he was afraid to visit Philadelphia.

The reader will part from Dr. Durbin's volumes with a sincere respect for his abilities, his liberality, and his intelligence.

3. — *A Lecture on the late Improvements in Steam Navigation and the Arts of Naval Warfare, with a brief Notice of Ericsson's Caloric Engine*; delivered before the Boston Lyceum. By J. O. SARGENT. New York and London: Wiley & Putnam. 1844. 8vo. pp. 64.

THIS discourse is a very appropriate one for a lyceum lecture. It is well and vigorously written, abounding in interesting facts and lucid statements. The most interesting part to the general reader will be the biographical sketch of Ericsson, the inventor of the propeller and of the caloric engine. The name of this gentleman has recently become well known in the United States, on account of his connection with the unfortunate war-steamer Princeton. The circumstances of his early life, as related by Mr. Sargent, are curious and interesting. We copy a part of the biographical sketch.

"John Ericsson was born in 1803, in the province of Vermland, among the iron mountains of Sweden. His father was a mining proprietor, so that the youth had ample opportunities to watch the operation of the various engines and machinery connected with the mines. These had been erected by mechanicians of the highest scientific attainments, and presented a fine study to a mind of mechanical tendencies. Under such influences, his innate mechanical talent was early developed. At the age of ten years, he had constructed with his own hands, and after his own plans, a miniature saw-mill; and had made numerous drawings of complicated mechanical contrivances, with instruments of his own invention and manufacture.

"In 1814, he attracted the attention of the celebrated Count Platen, who had heard of his boyish efforts, and desired an interview with him. After carefully examining the various plans and drawings which the youth exhibited on this occasion, the Count handed them back to him, simply observing in an impressive manner, 'Continue as you have commenced, and you will one day produce something extraordinary.' Count Platen was the intimate personal friend of Berna-